

THE MUSLIM VOICE

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Mayor of Sarajevo in Toronto, October 24

By HUSSEIN AP HAMDANI

For three long years, we have read about the slaughtering and raping of fellow Muslims in Bosnia. We have heard countless lectures reminding us of our duties in this Jihad. Many prayers have been made, praying to Allah for a Muslim victory over the Serbians.

A manifold amount of tears were shed when we watched the news of yet another Serbian mortar attack on a crowded market in the heart of Sarajevo, killing scores of civilians.

But now, only by the grace of Allah, the Mayor of Sarajevo, Dr. Tarik Koposovic will be coming to Canada, to tell us what is really going on in the capital of Bosnia.

The University of Toronto Muslim Stu-

dents' Association in conjunction with the Bosnian Canadian Relief Association are proud to bring the Mayor to Canada for five days in October. During his brief stay, it is hoped that the Mayor will have an opportunity to meet with Prime Minister Chretien.

Notwithstanding, the climax of Dr. Koposovic's trip will be his only North American public lecture at the University of Toronto's Convocation Hall on October 24, 1995 at 7:30pm. The price of admission for this remarkable event is only \$5.00. We here at the MSA are expecting over 1500 people to come out to



find out what it is like to be the Mayor of a city under wartime conditions for the last three years.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to observe one of the few remaining true Muslim heroes, who is leader of a people fighting a Jihad. Recall and heed what Allah says

in the Holy Qur'an:

"Let them fight in God's cause - all who are willing to barter the life for the life to come, for unto him who fights in God's cause, whether he be slain or be victorious, We shall in time grant a mighty reward. And why should you not fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated (and oppressed)? Men, women, and children, whose cry is:

"Our Lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors, and raise for us out of your grace, a protector, and raise for us out of Your grace one who will bring us succour." Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah and those who are bent on denying Faith, fight in the cause of evil. So fight against those friends of Satan; feeble indeed is the guile of Satan." (Qur'an: 4:74-76)

Our intention in the MSA is to ensure that this event becomes a Muslim-unity event. We pray that Muslims and non-Muslims from all over North America come to Toronto to spend time with Dr. Koposovic.

Tickets are going fast to please do not delay for more ticket info please call Hussein Hamdani (416) 204-1308 or Zahra Bachus (416) 763-6396.

An Interview with Amina Assilmi Sister s in Islamic Work and their Islamic Development

TMV STAFF

On a wooden bench in Kingston, Ontario, I turned to pose my first interview question to the sister beside me, Amina Assilmi. She is the Director of the International Union of Muslim Women, and also a well-known speaker & activist.

TMV: As you know, there is a real problem in the Muslim community about sisters not becoming active. This is what I would like to focus on for this interview. Where do you think this problem is coming from? Why are sisters not becoming involved?

AA: Well, it comes primarily from cultural ideas and things that have been implanted in them by parents & the cultures that they live in.

Most of the ideas that women should not be involved or active in any way really comes from the European pollution of Islam, and Muslims ignorance of Islam.

TMV: In terms of sisters these problems still exist today. What do you think the goal is? Where do we



want to be?

AA: See, there's a danger that I see amongst some of the sisters, that they become almost feminists. And this is really bad. I see some of our sisters who think that in order to be accepted by the men as an equal, that they must force their way in, and they become aggressive and really veering in their behavior. They are not being LADIES.

And a Muslim woman above all else is a lady. Always. She is a person of enormous dignity. Even when she's playing, she always maintains her dignity. She is forever a

Dangers of Feminist Methods

And some of our sisters, in order to be involved, are following the feminist mode of becoming very male in their aggressiveness and their loudness and their conduct and behavior. And this is very dangerous. There is animosity that they are starting to demonstrate towards men in general, thinking men are the enemy and men are against them and they have to defeat men.

Actually, what the women have to do, is that they have to GAIN Islamic knowledge themselves. And when they can point out problems using Qur'an and hadith instead of aggressiveness, loudness and obnoxiousness, then brothers have no choice but to accept it. And it's a slow process.

But too many of our sisters take knowledge too lightly. If they would concentrate more on having GENUINE knowledge and doing things correctly according to the *Sunnah* [example of the Prophet] they would get much further.

(Continued on Page 4)

CAIR SPECIAL REPORT

ANOTHER MOSQUE DESECRATED IN U.S.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington-based Islamic advocacy group, has learned of an attack on a Georgian mosque involving vandalism and the use of satanic symbols.

The attack on Masjid Al-Moineneen in Clarkston, Ga., apparently occurred some time prior to its discovery on September 11.

Muslim community representatives say the damage included broken windows, damaged light fixtures, and the discharge of fire extinguishers, as well as the satanic symbols (inverted five-pointed stars, etc.) burned into the mosques carpet. When contacted by CAIR on September 13, DeKalb County Police detective W.G. Green said he had not visited the mosque. Detective Green also said there are no leads in the case.

Clarkston Muslim leaders say there are 600 to 700 members in the local Islamic community. Masjid Al-Moineneen is newly-purchased and was not occupied at the time of the vandalism.

Not the first time

This is not the first such incident to

strike Islamic institutions in the United States. In September of 1994, a newly-completed mosque in Yuba City, Calif., burned to the ground in what was ruled an arson attack.

In October, a suspicious fire damaged a mosque in Brooklyn, N.Y. And in April of this year, a mosque in High Point, N.C., also burned following what community members believe was an arson attack. On June 6, the building housing the Islamic Society of Greater Springfield, Ill., was damaged in an arson attack.

CAIR recently issued a report on more than 200 incidents of anti-Muslim threats, harassment, stereotyping, property damage and physical assaults that resulted from unfounded links between Muslims and the April 19th terrorist attack on the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Our Feature on "Students in Islamic Work" includes an excellent parable about a broken car and its passengers... (Page 6/7)

We have a focus on Bosnia, including a prize-winning poem on Page 2.

There is information on MSA activities in the Toronto area on Page 12.

Next month:

Dr. Turabi's "Women in Sudan" and Islam Awareness Week Special.

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The Spirit of Islamic Work

The spirit of Islamic work is captured in some beautiful ayahs in Surah al-Insan:

"The truly virtuous are they who fulfill their vows, and stand in awe of a Day whose woe is bound to spread far and wide, and who give food — despite their own want of it — unto the needy, the orphan and the captive, [saying in their hearts], 'we feed you for the sake of God alone: we desire no recompense from you, nor thanks: behold, we stand in awe of our Sustainer's judgement on a distressful, fateful Day!'"

And so, God will preserve them from the woes of that Day, and will bestow on them brightness and joy, and will reward them for all their patience in adversity with a garden of bliss and with [garments] of silk."

(Surah al-Insan: 76: 7-12)

THE UNTITLED...

By Yasir Khan

A house of cards they built with pride

Their feet of clay kept warm inside

All swept away by a savage tide

Falling prey to a cruel genocide

To re-write a destiny bruised and mangled

Comes a so-called knight, his banner star-spangled

He brings hope, with deceit entangled

His gift of life - a poisoned apple

Like joyless birds with jailing leathers

Their smiles depend on borrowed pleasures

Their fates are judged by alien measures

While we dig for buried treasure...

Yasir Khan is the President of the University of Toronto (Scarborough) MSA, and a man of words.

Melting Away In the Pakistani Heat

By Abdul-Rehman Malik

In Pakistan, Islam is paid lip-service by the authorities, discredited by the Mullahs, mocked by the intellectuals, and misinterpreted by local customs and the imams in the local mosques.

The result is that the mosques are largely empty for the daily prayers, and the majority of people, while claiming to be Muslims, have abandoned the practice of Islam as a way of life.

I might be wrong in my interpretation of things, but these are my impressions this summer.

It is a sad state of affairs, compounded by the various media institutions who try to espouse cultural values taken from India and the West at the expense of developing Islamic cultural institutions.

TV and India

Except for the failure of organized Islamic work, this remains the next biggest problem in Pakistan. The availability of Indian songs, movies, magazines etc. have created an inferiority complex among Pakistanis.

Who cares for Lollywood (as Pakistan's film industry is called) when you can get naked women, handsome heroes and a high dose of sex and violence from Bollywood (India's film industry). The proliferation of the satellite dish has made the cultural divide all too apparent.

Pakistan Television, which consists of three channels (PTV 1 & 2, and Shalimar TV Network). The former are government-owned and the latter is private. New shows like "Pepsi's Top of the Pakistani Pops" run by the Shalimar Network try to copy Indian music programs; the videos are not as lewd or crude, but the concept is the same - I think it's only a matter of time.

AROUND THE WORLD



Ironies of life

The irony of it is that the programming always begins with the Quran, then a 'religious' song. But as soon as the formalities are over the show really begins.

The blatant sexism and anti-woman attitudes of many of the songs and shows is disturbing. The objectification of women as objects of desire is so much a part of the Indian-Pakistani culture that it is common for a woman to be slapped around by a man in a movie or a TV show.

The dress of the characters are provocative and insulting.

So a confused society has been created through the clash of cultures, Indian and Pakistani, along with a nominal (not real) Islam. A society unsure of itself or its faith.

Instead of faith there is ritual - Eid, Jumma, Ashura, Milad an-Nabi - all of them inundated with silly innovations, which are piously practised and blindly adhered to.

THE MUSLIM VOICE NEEDS YOU

The Muslim Voice has been growing constantly. Alhamdulillah. As a part of this process, we need more staff. We need people to help with:

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- ♦ Graphics/Art
- ♦ Writers;
- ♦ Distribution.

For more information, please email: frabbani@epas.utoronto.ca or call Faraz Rabbani at (416) 695-1636.

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Serbian aggression supported by Church Bosnia: A Very Christian War

By FEYYAZ YUSUF
From Q-News

One of the most striking features of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia has been the muscular Christianity of the Serbs. Many of the atrocities recorded by journalists, including impalements, throat-slitting and rape, have been preceded by appeals to convert to Orthodox Christianity.

Detailed reports have surfaced in the Belgrade press describing the forced baptism of Muslims in occupied areas of Bosnia, and it is known that at least some have accepted the sacrament in order to save their lives.

None of this is new. Forced baptism has been part of the militant Serb agenda for many years. Back in 1917, Yugoslavias future prime minister Stojan Prohic remarked:

"We have the solution for Bosnia. When our army crosses the Dnna, we will give the Muslims twenty-four hours, or even forty-eight hours, of time to become Christians. Those who do not wish to do so are to be cut down, as we did in Serbia earlier."

This consistent attitude of hatred grows from several roots. One is the hoary myth that Serbs were forced to convert to Islam during the centuries of Ottoman rule.

But by far the strongest support for this genocidal attitude has come from the Serbian Orthodox Church, historically a dark, seething mass of phobias about Jews and Muslims.

With the death of Titos generation of leaders, the 1980s saw the rapid revival of militant nationalism in Serbia. In 1986 the Serb bishops, eager to regain their influence in the new post-Communist society, endorsed the famous Serbian Memorandum, a document drawn up by nationalist intellectuals which demanded the territorial unity of the Serbian people, and thereby paved the way for Belgrades war for a

way for Belgrades war for a Greater Serbian state.

A leading lay intellectual who contributed to this document, Drago Kalajic, explained that the Bosnian Muslims do not belong to the European family of nations. They are semi-Arabs, the result of a genetic predetermination and penchant.

Hailing such rhetoric, leading churches such as Abbot Ananije and Metropolitan Jovan Pavlovic launched extreme and stereotyped verbal attacks on Islam throughout the late 1980s, catching up the already intense level of hatred and Christian revanchism.

Official Christian magazines such as Glas Crkve played forcefully the ideas of the more inflammatory nationalists in Belgrade in those dying years of Yugoslavia. Glas Crkve even printed the collected works of Vuk Draskovic, the Chemik militia leader accused of war crimes and playing a pioneering role in the ethnic cleansing process.

The baleful influence of the Church soon percolated into school and university textbooks, further resurrecting the traditionally hateful Serbian view of Muslims. A university textbook on literature published in 1989 describes the epic of Bishop Njegos, a long poem which celebrated the extermination of Montenegrans Muslims in the 18th century.

The textbook tells students: The Muslims had been the very symbol of all that is evil in this world, Satans seed. But Njegos sense of justice and righteousness was highly developed, so only that of an Orthodox ruler could be. Thus he could liquidate without mercy the Muslims, as the embodiment of evil and iniquity.

The impaled heads reminded him and his subjects daily that one must struggle against evil, and that that is the greatest Christian and human duty. For Njegos, revenge was a holy, divine act. Yes, he was in favour of peace and love among people, but only among people that did not apply to

from the Serbian Orthodox Church. Arkan continues to provide the bodyguards for the Metropolitan of Montenegro, that country's most senior cleric.

As the war unfolded, it became clear that the entire Serb religious hierarchy was ranged behind Karadzic and his nationalists.

When in April 1993 the Vance-Owen peace plan for Bosnia was announced, the Serbian Patriarch Pavle, and Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro, urged the Serbs to reject the plan and to press for a just military solution. The Serbian Synod then affirmed its support for a Greater Serbia, following this up with a public procession through the streets of Belgrade in the company of Arkan and his officers. Serbs must fight, the Patriarch preached, now as never before.

The Church-backed militias in Bosnia, their consciences clear thanks to the bishops fervent prayers and blessings, grew ever more ferocious in their attacks on civilians. When news broke in the international media of the Serb concentration camps, whose horrific conditions had been documented by visiting Western journalists, the Serbian Church convened a special synod explicitly to deny these accusations.

In the name of Gods truth, the bishops thundered, we declare that such camps neither have existed nor exist in the Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The official Church publication Prizivavlje then claimed that no women or children had ever been detained by Serbs, while Patriarch Pavle blamed all atrocities on the Muslims.

In Bosnia itself, every bishop has supported the extremists, and condemned the more

moderate Serbs who continue to believe in a multiethnic Bosnian state. The Metropolitan of Bosnia, who travels from unit to unit to bolster morale, recently told troops:

"We have always won the war. God will not abandon us this time either. The Bishop of Tuzla has called against the Anian plague" - referring to Islam. A bishop opens every session of the rebel Serb parliament with a prayer. Everywhere, priests, monks and army chaplains preach the medieval message of Christian holy war against the Muslims.

Elsewhere in the Christian world, this bloodthirsty revival of the Crusading instinct has been regarded with indulgence rather than horror.

The Greek bishops have voted in their Synod to give Karadzic a medal for services to Christendom, calling him a most devoted servant of our Lord Jesus Christ.

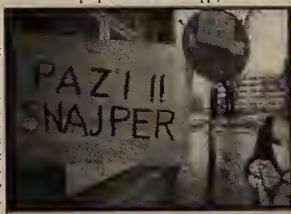
The Russian Orthodox Church has declared that it is the Serbs, not the Muslims, who have been the victims of genocide. And Protestants, well-known for their sentimental view of Orthodoxy, have steadfastly refused to condemn their Balkan Christian brethren.

According to veteran Bosnia watcher Adrian Hastings, "the Serbian Orthodox Church has had closer relations with the Church of England than any other. To take a strong line against Serb nationalism could be to displace ones Orthodox friends."

He adds: "It has from the start been British policy that a Greater Serbia should be created and Bosnia destroyed. And church leadership in this country, by its erstwhile inability to challenge that policy, has colluded, and is colluding, in that crime."

The World Council of Churches, backed by the Bosnia Holocaust Deniers

(Continued on page 4)



One of the most striking features of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia has been the muscular Christianity of the Serbs. Many of the atrocities... have been preceded by appeals to convert to Orthodox Christianity.

beasts with human faces.

As war broke out in Bosnia in 1992, Church publicans stepped up their fierce war of words. The official Church journal Pravoslavlje attacked Serb pacifists as helping the evil forces that are opposed to God. In our present Annagadon they are on the side of the destructive Gog and Magog...

Faithful to its heritage, the Church hierarchy rallied to the cause of the more extreme Serb militias operating in Bosnia. Priests raised funds for the White Eagles, a fanatical militia operating in the Drina Valley area, and whose commander had proclaimed: We are not only interested in Serbia, but in a Christian, Orthodox Serbia, with no mosques or unbelievers. Similarly, Zeljko Raznjajic, known as Arkan, who has been accused by the UN and Amnesty of gross and repeated crimes against humanity, confirmed in an interview with a Belgrade magazine that his funds came above all

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INTERVIEW WITH AMINA ASSILMI Sisters: Participation & Development

(Continued from page 1)

masjid was 1981, when women didn't generally serve on the board of directors at masjids. It was a tokenism because I was already pretty well known.

And I was such a lady, and so gentle, and so quiet & peaceful that of course no one thought I would be any trouble. But, while I would sit in the meetings and rarely speak, if my hand went up, the brothers learned very quickly that it was something serious.

And I would support whatever I was saying using Qur'an and hadith. After 6 months, I would raise my hand and the brothers would ask, "Ok, what are we doing wrong now?"

But I never once had to raise my voice. I never had to become obnoxious, aggressive or difficult in any way. Any one of those brothers to this day, if you ask them about me they will say, "She is such a lady."

If we have respect, we have to have respect for ourselves and that respect will be there when we have the knowledge of Qur'an and hadith; when we know the correct way to conduct ourselves, when we know the correct way to speak, and have the correct information; and when we know how to correct people politely, to where we don't upset and anger them.

There is still a lot of cultural prejudice, and it will be a long and hard struggle. But we have come a long way from where it was when I first became Muslim. We have, and we will come even further.

Staying away from feminism

But I don't want the Muslim sisters to get mixed up with feminist thinking, and move away from doing things *Islamically*. They must remain as Muslim women, women of dignity.

TMV: Going back to feminism, some sisters identify themselves with certain aspects of the feminist movement. Can you elaborate about this topic of Muslim women and feminism?

AA: I am very offended when anyone bills me as a Muslim feminist. I AM NOT A FEMINIST. And I am offended by the title.

A feminist implies an opposition between men and women, which I could not accept. I do not wish to be called a feminist. I AM A MUSLIM. And that's all I want to be. I don't think any Muslim woman should be calling herself a feminist.

If we are Muslim, then we are far more powerful than any feminist that ever walked the face of the Earth.

TMV: When we see that sisters are not getting active, the question arises: "What can we do?" What can we do about some of the barriers that exist? For example, some brothers think sisters should stay away (especially from leadership positions). or sisters who don't feel welcome in their MSK because they don't wear hijab... issues like these, how can we deal with them?

AA: Because there are so many individuals involved, because there are so many things you have to do, each individual is by itself dealt with in a different way...

Simply, number one: Have knowledge of Qur'an and Sunnah. Be able to access that information very quickly to show that "Yes, it's here... it's right here in Sahih Bukhari, vol such-and-such pg. such-and-such."

Unless you have knowledge, you can't really correct the ac-

tions of other people. And you may be wrong yourself!

The other thing is not judging each other. People will come when they don't feel they will be judged. If they will be accepted for who they are. And this is a VERY important thing.

The Hijab Issue

This issue of hijab drives me crazy. I BELIEVE in hijab. I LOVE hijab. Hijab is very important to me, this is part of my identity. I love that it stands out and screams "Hello! Here's a Muslim woman!"

We've made God very distant - we don't have the closeness to God that we should have. And we are not appreciative of how much Allah loves and cares for us.

(But) some people aren't there yet. And I don't want them to put on the hijab, until they are there, because if they put on the hijab to please me, then I have become more important [to them] than God.

And the rest of us need to recognize this too, that whatever we must do must be done *fi sabil Allah* (for the sake of Allah).

And if we learn to accept people, accept their uniqueness, accept their differences, find common grounds and say this is the way we'll go, with our common ground and we will turn our face from these other things. We will just ignore them for now. A lot of people will change...

TMV: Let's pretend that I'm reading this article right now, and I'm thinking, "I do want to become better, what can

I do?" besides increasing the amount of Qur'an or hadith that I study. Some people make the effort for a while, and then they forget about it because of homework, or other things like that...

AA: Well, first of all I suggest they take little steps. Ok, and that you work more than anything else on developing your relationship with Allah.

I think the first thing I would want [us] to do is recognize how much Allah loves you. One of the ways of really comprehending that is to look at the 99 attributes of Allah.

And when you look at those 99 attributes and you can look at the definition of them, and really examine the definition very fully as to what it all means, and then ask the question "What good is this to me? What benefit is that to me?" And you would be AMAZEED at how much you would discover, and become very aware of Allah's love for you.

Becoming aware of Allah's love for us

Become AWARE of how much Allah loves us. How generous Allah has been with us. How much Allah is giving to us. If we recognize Allah's love, then we will have more desire to be closer to Allah and be able to make those steps to draw closer to Allah.

We've made God very distant - we don't have the closeness to God that we should have. And we are not appreciative of how much Allah loves and cares for us.

The Qur'an is the evidence of His love. But he gives us all the signs too. The Qur'an speaks of the signs. Look at the sky. Look at the MAGNIFICENCE of the sky. You can't duplicate the color or the stars.

And when you are close to a lake and you look out over it and see the light reflect and you let the aromas or the flowers or the shades of green in everything... The clouds! The sunsets! The sunsets!

All of these BEAUTIFUL things Allah made to please our eyes. To ease our minds. Things to make our lives easier. And there is evidence all around.

More than anything else, is your relationship between you and Allah. And there is so much you derive from it. There is a Surah of the Qur'an that people read and look at it and just recall the time of revelation. And they don't relate it to themselves in any way. And it begins "Have I not expanded thy breast for you?" (Surah al-Infitah)

The more that you are able to recognize how much Allah loves us and how much Allah has given us, the more your breast will be expanded. We will start understanding a lot of things.

The more that you recognize Allah's love, the more you want to know. The more you know, the more you recognize... it's a never ending cycle. So that's where we need to begin.

Develop your relationship with Allah.

Bosnia: The Serbs and the Church

(Continued from page 3)

among the British bishops, has refused to censure the Serbian church. In January 1994, the WCC issued a 27-page statement on former Yugoslav

Attestingly, this Orwellian document refers to the Muslims only once, in the context of its unqualified claim that violence and brutality are being committed on every side, Serb, Croat and Muslim. It laments the desperate shortage of food and medical supplies in Serbia and Montenegro, but refrains from mentioning the far worse shortage in Bosnia, or the bombardment of Bosnia towns.

In fact, Bosnia is not mentioned even once. The statement concludes, predictably, by voicing the WCC's strong opposition to any military intervention.

The conclusion from all this is clear enough. In this conflict between gnomish Christians and peaceful unbelievers, the

Churches' loyalties have been stated honestly and explicitly.

The age-old Christian urge to exterminate the infidel, far from dying with the Enlightenment as claimed, is once again rampant in the heart of Europe. Membership of the European Community is conditional on possessing a shared Christian heritage, observed Jacques Delors in 1993. Crusading Europe, fired by fourteen hundred years of hatred of Muslims and Jews, is sure that it knows what is at stake in Bosnia.

As Karadzic himself has prophesied: The West will be grateful to us one day, because we elected to defend Christian values and Christian culture.

Reprinted from *Q-News*, Europe's biggest selling Muslim weekly newspaper

BOSNIAN CHILDREN RELIEF

Since April 1992, we here at Bosnian Children Relief have organized numerous humanitarian missions aimed at children in Bosnia and Hercegovina, supplying them with food, medicine, evacuations, etc.

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Hakeem Olajuwon re-affirms the faith Re-Awakening of The Dream

By OSAMA HAMMAD

We are witnessing an Islamic awakening in North America.

One of the main reasons behind this is that materialist 'civilization' failed to fulfill the spiritual needs of people, causing great emptiness in the hearts and souls of those who followed it.

The Attraction

Therefore, it is easy to see how Islam attracted many of the rich and famous figures of the West such as Mohammed Ali, Yusuf Islam (formerly Cat Stevens), and more recently, the controversial boxer Mike Tyson.

In Islam, these stars found a shield from the emptiness which led to the deterioration and destruction of many other well-known Western personalities who resorted to drugs, crimes, and ultimately suicide for comfort.

The Islamic awakening was not limited to stars however. It also included many Western thinkers and intellectuals including Dr. Roger Garaudy, the French philosopher who was a major communist intellectual. Also included are for-

mer black nationalists such as Jamil Al Amin (H Rap Brown), and Malcolm X (El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz).

Hakeem the Dream

Among those famous figures, we also find Houston Rockets player Hakeem Olajuwon whose star rose even higher after re-embracing Islam. His story shows how Islam can influence people and how it is reflected in every facet of life.

Almost 15 years ago, a towering Nigerian teenager first set foot in the United States. He wanted an education. In return, he offered his dynamic, but unrefined basketball talent. His path has since taken him to the NBA Finals three times and the NBA All-Star Game on several occasions. This year, he was named the best basketball player in the world.

But what Olajuwon, now 32, listens to more than anything else in life are the words of the Qur'an. "I have recommitted myself to my faith," he said.

In May 1994, Olajuwon bought a handsome old bank building in downtown Houston which he intends to convert

into a masjid.

A Youth

As a youth in Lagos, Nigeria, religious beliefs played an important part in Olajuwon's life. But he drifted away from practicing his faith when he became a University of Houston basketball star in a glorious era of

teammates, did not.

Straying

"In those days, I had no patience," Olajuwon admitted. "I did not follow the faith devotedly. I was with my teammates doing what they wanted to do."

After a while, I realized most of the people I was around had no direction, no spiritual knowledge, because they were only concerned with material things.

"Finally I realized what I had left behind, and I decided to recommit myself to my faith. I was hungry to seek knowledge. I did a great deal of reading and study to find out my obligations as a Muslim."

Pilgrimage to Islam

At 28, Olajuwon made the pilgrimage to Makkah (Hajj). The trip gave him a deeper understanding of his religion. "Rich and poor doesn't matter there," he says. "Money or social status can't help you. [Islam] teaches you humility and equality, patience and tolerance, self-resistance and self control."

Other NBA players say that Olajuwon has learned those

lessons well. These days, he rarely gets upset over an official's call or an opponent's play. "I'm still the same person, but I will not be the aggressor," he says.

"People ask me how you can be religious in such a violent sport, but good and evil always have to fight in one forum or another. I never really changed, but I grew as a person. There's a difference."

Terry Blount, a sportswriter for *The Houston Chronicle*, best sums up Olajuwon by saying, "He has earned all the honors and adulation a sports hero can hope for, including half a million fans to cheer him and his teammates at a parade through downtown Houston. But Hakeem Olajuwon's foundations are set in the rock of his Muslim faith."

Editor's note: Some information for this article was obtained from the July-August 1994 issue of ARAMCO World.

Osama Hammad studies Engineering at the University of Toronto, and was the second-last person Faraz thought would write on Olajuwon.

Sabli ibn Sa'd says: Allah's Messenger, blessings & peace be upon him, said:

"Good deeds are like treasures, and there are keys to these treasures. So glad tidings unto the servant whom God has made a key to good and a barrier to evil; and woe unto the servant whom God has made a key to evil and a barrier to good."

(narrated in Ibn Majah)

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FEATURES SECTION

It was once stated by Imam al-Ghazali that,

"There are many who are alive, but do so little as to be not much different from those who are dead."

This is a statement that we as students should consider. Some of us have lives divided between the spheres of home, school, and perhaps even work. However, we must remember that it is important to keep the student Islamic movement going, and we should help our brothers and sisters struggling for this cause. Remember, we will be forming the next generation of Islamic workers, insbha Allah. We must remain active and alive, to make a difference within our communities and MSAs. We should all make an effort to...

Join the Movement!

On the Road to Working Together

BY NUSHEEN AMEENUDDIN

Picture yourself piling into a car with your fellow MSA members, about to embark on yet another road trip to an Islamic conference. Everyone is excited about hearing their favorite speakers, meeting old friends, making new connections. But what would happen if this buoyant busload came to a screeching halt?

Think of how your group would behave if suddenly you were stuck on the road, while dozens of cars raced by. Would you be disappointed, disillusioned, dormant, or determined to get your vehicle running again?

I am reminded of a wonderful parable, laden with meaning and smackung with a painful truth, that a wise Muslim once told me:

The Muslim Ummah is a stalled car.

Sadly, this is our current state. At the most, we are idling on the shoulder of the road, and even that is a generous description. It seems we have forgotten the glorious early days of Islam when the proverbial Muslim engine was running at maximum efficiency. Not a single dedicated Muslim remained idle. They used all available means to establish Islam and keep the momentum going.

One brilliant example of Muslim ingenuity involves Sultan Muhammad II, who at a very young age assumed the throne of the Ottoman empire. The Sultan achieved what many considered impossible, including building a fort in just three months when even his closest advisors told him that it would take no less than three years. Perhaps his most notable accomplishment came when he and his Muslim army captured Constantinople in a spectacular victory over the formidable Byzantine empire and its allies. Even after a severe setback in that war, the Muslims came back as an even stronger force when Sultan Muhammad implemented a most unique plan to pull the entire Muslim navy over a mountain on greased wooden planks. Thus, victory for the Muslims was sealed, Alhamdulillah, and Sultan Muhammad earned the title of Al-Fatih, the Conqueror.

Four Distinct Groups Emerge

But today, we remain in the stalled car that is our Ummah and wonder what can be done. After awhile, we notice four very distinct groups of people begin to emerge. The first group is inspecting the car and trying to fix whatever went wrong. The second is asleep inside the car. The third bunch is standing off to the side watching,

but doing nothing more. Finally, we have the fourth group which is trying to ensure that the car remains broken. Clearly, these groups each need help if the car is ever to move again.

What can we do?

The members of the first group have the right attitude, but they need better coordination. Progress will not be made if one person is trying to fix the engine while



We are at a stage where not a single Muslim can be wasted. Every hand must contribute, in its own way, to restarting the Ummah.

another is attempting to push the car along. Before they can begin to fix the car, they must first determine what is wrong. After discovering the problem, they must agree on a plan of action. Once an agreement is reached, their individual forces can combine positively instead of cancelling each other out.

The second group, the sleepers, are a burden and must be roused. Once awake, they must be informed of the problem and made to realize its gravity. Then they need to be told what they can do to ameliorate the situation.

The fourth group (hindering the effort) cannot be dealt with as easily as the first two. When a group such as this is actively trying to undo the hard work of others or showing unconstructive criticism, a number of factors need to be taken into consideration. First of all, do not expect to change their minds quickly and easily, or even at all. Often times, it is like arguing with a donkey - you waste your breath and annoy the donkey! Gentle education is preferable and nasha (advice) is a duty of one Muslim to another, but if they persist in hindering your progress, do not allow them to distract you from your task. Your energies are required elsewhere.

It is also necessary to be cautious with the fourth group. Watch out, they may try to push the car in the opposite direction, setting everyone even further back than initially. But even if they do that, remember to deal with them Islamically, for if they are dealt with harshly, it will only cause fitna and confusion among all the groups and you will get nowhere fast. The overall process is a jihad of sorts.

Just Standing There Watching...

Ironically, it is the third group (standing and watching) which is the most complex and problematic. You must first determine why they are standing by. Are they lazy? Do they think the car cannot be fixed, or do they not trust

those who are trying to fix the car? Maybe they think the car is not necessary to reach their destination. These are all very serious concerns. Unfortunately, it seems the bulk of the Ummah falls into this group. There is no quick remedy for the third group. But bear in mind that a small spark in the engine may be what these people need, either as a warning that if something is not done, their entire journey will go up in smoke (literally) or that there is hope that the vehicle can be fixed.

Others among the group of idlers simply lack confidence in their ability to contribute. If this is the case, a gentle nudge (occasionally, an outright shove, done nicely) in the right direction may be the much needed catalyst. This step must be followed by education and training, which will, insbha'Allah give them faith in themselves and others, as well as a solid foundation on which to operate.

They must also learn that they should not waste time waiting around for a tow truck or a mechanic. Maybe all the car needs is a good push. If nothing else, they can hand tools to the workers. The fact is that a really good mechanic might not show up for a very long time and the people in the car must make do with each other.

Everyone must Contribute

We are at a stage where not a single Muslim can be wasted. Every hand must contribute, in its own way, to restarting the Ummah. This may involve small sacrifices of doing what is needed rather than what we want individually. We need to hone our skills, yet be diverse enough in our abilities to perform a variety of functions.

Every once in a while, we need a jump start, a rejuvenation of our ummah which will enable us to feel the spirit of Islam coursing through us. We also need spiritual nourishment (filling ourselves with Qur'an, Sunnah, and other Islamic knowledge) on a regular basis, as well as the occasional tune-up to ensure that we are functioning like a very strong Ummah should.

This ongoing metaphor makes me wonder which group each of us falls into. Are we eager to help but lack direction and coordination? Are we in a state of dormancy? Perhaps we are quiet observers who wait, in vain, for a tow truck to lift us into action. I sincerely hope none of us is trying to destroy the hard work of others. Regardless of which group we identify with, we are clogging the Ummah and will continue to be a liability until we get our act together.

May Allah (swt) guide us all to and in the galvanization of our Ummah.



The Vital Role of Muslim Students in Islamic Work

by HUSSEIN SARR

If we look at the history of Muslims in North America, we see that Muslim activism practically began by the formation of the Muslim Students' Association of the US and Canada in the early 1960s. Even today, 30 years later, much of the work for the cause of Allah (swt) is done by energetic Muslim youth.

We still have a long way to go to establish ourselves as Muslims in this country, but even the longest journey begins with a single step. Alhamdulillah, the youth of North America have been willing to initiate this long journey. The role of Muslim students in Islamic work is very crucial. We have an advantage that the previous generation no longer has. We are young and energetic, full of fresh ideas, yet not loaded down with as many responsibilities as our parents. Basically, we have the ideas and resources to ensure that Islam becomes a powerful, recognizable force in North America.

Recognizing Active in the Community

The role of Muslim students is not limited to the campus - it extends to Muslim communities as well. Alhamdulillah, in the past several years, Muslim students have been intent on doing Islamic work. They have conducted activities and programs that have indeed made a major impact. The following is a

partial list of some recent Islamic activities coordinated by students.

The Eid Trow Drive has been conducted by many communities in America. In Southern California, the Muslim Students Network has sponsored the Eid Trow Drive for the past three years.

They placed collection boxes in eleven mosques throughout Southern California for the duration of Ramadan and Alhamdulillah, each year they were able to collect thousands of wrapped gifts for needy Muslim children. A similar program was conducted by the youth in Flint, Michigan.

One popular program is Dawah in Prisons. A group of Muslim sisters conducted a weekly halaqa for the people in a women's prison. Some people converted to Islam as a result of it. Many more are interested and attend every week.

Another similar program conducted by some UCLA students is IYTP, the incarcerated Youth Tutorial Project. Once a month, 10-15 Muslim students from UCLA went to prison to tutor Muslim inmates in various subjects. But it involved much more than academics. The UCLA students also discussed deen, which made it a learning experience for both.

One weekend in Ramadan, the UCLA students broke fast with the Muslim prisoners, which proved to be a very spiritual and bonding experience.

Another unique program is the Islamic Hospice Program. The Hospice was established about 15 years ago. It is a health service for people with life-limiting diseases. Hospice provides nurses, home health aides, and volunteers to patients enrolled in the program to make the last months or weeks of their lives more comfortable. An energetic and very dynamic Muslim sister from Michigan came up with the idea of establishing services geared towards Muslim patients. It is a good project and it reminds other Muslim youth that volunteering anywhere provides great opportunities and a valuable experience.

You may think that you are too young for such a project, but the volunteer coordinators who interviewed this Muslim sister found out that she was their youngest volunteer ever. They could not believe that a 17-year-old was mature enough to tend to dying patients. But the maturity was not hers; rather, it was the depth that Islam instilled in her that made her seem mature.

Volunteering for All Organizations

Not only should we Muslims focus our energies in Islamically-related projects, we also need to get into the non-Muslim world and participate in their organizations. This way we can learn from their organization (which we sometimes lack) and they can learn from us. We can



help in health related fields, social services, community recreation centers, school programs, and many other places. These activities also provide ample dawah opportunities.

I have an incredibly long list of activities that Muslim students have done in terms of Islamic work. Rather than listing all of these past achievements, I want you to think of what still needs to be done. Then, start planning these activities. We still have a long way to go on our journey, and if we do not plan our route, we will not know where we are going or how we can get there.

Activism Beyond the Local Level

by AALIM FEVENS

What is MSA National?

The Muslim Students Association of the United States and Canada (MSA-National) is an organization representing 110 directly affiliated MSA Chapter organizations spread across North America. It was started in 1963 by a handful of MSA's and has grown rapidly since then. In 1986, MSA evolved into the Islamic Society of North America, a more community-based umbrella organization. With diminished resources and interest, MSA-National went through a period of confusion and floundering. But recently, MSA members met to redefine the mission and direction of MSA National as an Islamic organization. MSA's occupy a crucial niche in Islamic work in this continent. It is on college campuses that opinions are formed and cooperative relationships are established. Thus, it is at this level that MSA's can perform critical dawah as well as reach out to Muslim youth and help mold them into knowledgeable leaders and Da'at. The more effectively MSA's can train future leaders for Islamic work, the better off Islamic work will be in North America. It is the role of MSA-National to promote and facilitate this work at the chapter level.

What is the Current Mission of MSA National?

In June of 1995, MSA's national activists re-evaluated the mission of MSA-National to be

(paraphrased): To seek the pleasure of Allah through Iqanul al-Deen (establishment of deen) as stated in the Qur'an and Sunnah. To this end, MSA-National would provide for a systematic program of Islamic Education (Tarbiyah) of Muslim students, facilitate communication and coordination between MSA's, facilitate access to resources, maintain MSA-National's financial viability, and finally, to foster a spirit of cooperation, unity, and a common sense of purpose among MSA's and other Islamic organizations.

MSA National Projects that you can Volunteer for

In order to advance this mission, MSA-National has a number of ongoing projects, standing committees and individual programs. Although there are a growing number of MSA-National workers now engaged in fulfilling the mandates of these efforts, MSA is still in need of dedicated MSA workers. Think of how you can be part of this effort. MSA-National's ongoing projects include Islam Awareness Week and MSA e-mail mailing lists such as MSA-ORG and MSA-Net. In support of the IAW Project, MSA-National has produced and distributed an IAW Resource Manual. Also, with ISNET, a Muslim MID - a virtual world on-line, and growing numbers of MSA WWW pages, including one for MSA-National, there is a growing amount of resources accessible via the Internet. There are also standing committees in charge of promoting the goals of

the new MSA-National mission. One committee is responsible for promoting Tarbiyah programs such as Peace-Net and organizing leadership programs aimed at developing a core of MSA workers. The Finance committee is working to make MSA more financially stable. The Resources committee is charged with the responsibility of facilitating access to Islamic resources for MSA's. Another committee aims to

efforts, there are also annual MSA National conferences and leadership retreats, a program at ISNA's Annual Convention (and insha' Allah other Islamic organizations' major conventions in the future), cooperative efforts with ICNA's Campus Dawah Support Project, the annual MSA-National Affiliation Drive and other events. MSA-National has also compiled the MSA Speakers List, which provides information on over 230 speakers, and MSA contact information lists among other resources. The vast majority of the most successful projects are a result of individual initiatives, so anyone can have an impact, insha' Allah.

How can you get involved?

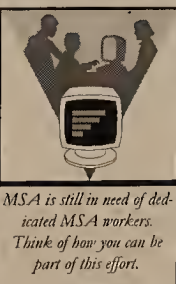
The rejuvenation of MSA-National provides several avenues for involvement. First, a person should be active locally in the sense of learning their deen, enjoying what is halal and avoiding the haram, fostering an environment of brotherhood/sisterhood, remembering Allah (swt) often, and seeking the pleasure of Allah (swt) in organizing and supporting efforts that advance the cause of Islam on campus. In addition to that, there are efforts on the regional level, between MSA's. Every MSA has different strengths. By working together, MSA's can become stronger in terms of people, resources and finances. Also, when one MSA grows weaker, the others will be in the position to help it. Also, when working at the regional level, it quickly becomes obvious that there are a number of resource

needs and issues common to all MSA's. This is where MSA-National should step in to meet the need so that that different MSA's don't have to duplicate efforts. Hence, the development of the projects outlined above. While working at the regional level, an MSA worker can act as a link between their MSA, the regional MSA's and MSA-National. The only real qualifications for an MSA-National worker are that the worker be a committed, practicing Muslim. Essentially, if there is anything that you would like to see MSA-National doing, or doing better, simply join MSA-National's group of workers and "make it so." That is how most of us initially got involved. It is up to you to take the initiative.

Contact Information.

Anyone interested in working with MSA-National could first join the MSA-Organizational Net (e-mail me at <fevens@quec.queensu.ca>), or go to MSA-National's WWW Page at <http://www.quec.queensu.ca/home/fevens/MSA-Nathl.html> where the e-mail addresses of the executive of MSA-National are listed. Also, feel free to approach or contact any of the MSA-National executive members or workers involved in any aspect of MSA-National.

Aadam Z. Fevens is the Vice-President for Canada MSA-National of U.S. and Canada.



improve communication between MSA-National and local chapters through the production of the newsletter, The MSA Link and other media. In addition to ongoing projects, MSA-National has individual projects like the International Student Handbook, the MSA Handbook, the MSA Starters Guide, the Orientation Handbook, and the Conference Handbook. A number of the latter projects are individual initiatives which still need contributors. Along with these

Connection to the Youth

Khadija Haffajee emphasizes close relationships

By ANWER KHAN

Muslim youth will be the adherents of our institutions, our faith and our mission on this continent today, they are setting their directions and receiving the most influential socialization of their lives. Thus, we the Muslim community is anxious to transfer its beliefs, values and lifestyles to them.

Yet there are many unforeseen challenges appearing. Says Khadija Haffajee talked about there in her lecture at the NSA Canada EZ Conference.

Urgency

She noted, for example that the attempted suicide rate for males 12-24 years old is 24%; the rate for females is 9%. (She noted that young females are generally more mature than young males.) These figures are unprecedented, and worrying.

They are worrying because Muslim youth are highly assimilated into this society, and are bound to be impacted by such trends.

It does not help that their understanding of Islam rarely exceeds the knowledge of rules and rituals, and are thus unable to face today's challenges.

In this regard, high school years are often disastrous. Many young Muslims face identity crises and often live double lives.

Many times, they are 'ideal Muslim youth' at home and at the mosque is completely transformed in the outside environment. Teenage years often mark a sapping of Islamic commitment, as well as vulnerability and much pain.

Facing these challenges

Allhamdulillah, there are also many Muslims striving to face these challenges. For example, Islamic youth groups have been formed and have developed a sustained commitment from a segment of the youth.

From her experience with such activities, Sr. Khadija was able to give us some advice.

Advice

Youth must be surveyed and profiled to get a sense of their general needs. Furthermore, each individual should be served according to his or her particular needs. We see this individualized treatment throughout the *Jirah* of the Prophet, peace be upon him.

There is also a need to befriending the youth, and to get them into a frame of mind that is receptive to advice. Young Muslims must know that they are appreciated and held dear.

Considering these needs, the necessity of commitment is clear. Even small efforts with the youth

have value, such as brief phone calls or reaching out to even one person. Consider that this may make the difference for us on the balance on the Day of Judgment.

There is also a strong need to develop Islamic alternatives to un-Islamic high school activities such as prom nights, where Muslim students face high peer-pressure to attend.

Such needs are getting more and more urgent, surely we can support such initiatives.

Anwer Khan is a 4th year student of Economics & Mathematics at the University of Toronto.



Working to keep our youth in the House of Islam

Who is a Believer?

By Dr. PARVEZ AHMAD

Based on faith in One God and one's deeds, the Qur'an has divided humanity into four categories: the *Kafirun* (disbelievers); the *Munafiqun* (hypocrites); the *Mushrikun* (polytheists or infidels); and the *Mu'minun* (believers).

Of these four categories, the first three have failed in this life, whereas the successful are the *Mu'minun*. The following is an attempt to define the word according to the Qur'an. Some of the following are the qualities Allah (swt) says are found in a *Mu'min*.

Characteristics and Qualities of the Mu'minun

- 1) Believes in Allah and His signs (23:1; 25:70; 25:73; 32:15; 2:177; 49:14-15)
- 2) Never doubts after believing (49:15)
- 3) Does not merely submit, but truly believes in Allah (49:14)
- 4) Worships Allah only, and do not engage in *Shirk* (17:23; 17:39; 25:63; 25:68; 9:112; 31:13)
- 5) Believes the sustenance comes from Allah (17:30) and praises Allah for it (9:112)
- 6) Obeys Allah and His Prophet, peace be upon him (33:71; 49:14)
- 7) Believes in the Hereafter (27:3; 2:177)
- 8) Believes in the Angels of Allah, the Messengers of Allah, and the Books of Allah (2:177)
- 9) Establishes and prays salat with attention, humility, protection and regularity (2:177; 23:2; 23:9; 25:64; 27:3; 31:17)
- 10) Gives Zakat, compulsory charity, and donations (23:4; 27:13; 2:177; 32:16).

Allah says:

"Call upon Me, I will respond to you. Verily, those who disdain My worship will surely enter Hell in Humiliation."

(Qur'an, 40: 60)

MUSLIM STUDENTS ON CAMPUS: Can We Face The Challenges?

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Free Will & Predestination 'If God Wills' -- what does this mean?

By OMAR SHABIR KHAN

Of the six principle doctrines in the Quran, the notion of qadar (predestination) is still debated.

Qadar means "decision" or "order," and implies that good and evil are from Allah, and more importantly, everything that happens is by His will.

[Insha'Allah]

This discussion focuses on how qadar relates to the concept of our accountability.

If Allah has determined one's destiny already, then what role do we play, if any, in defining our standing in the hereafter?

These questions serve to illustrate the complexity of the debate, and why it must be examined.

The Determinist Camp

Some scholars defined qadar to mean that there is strict determinism in the order of the universe. (There is cause (Allah) and unique effect).

In other words, existence and non-existence of everything, our good and evil deeds, our rewards and punishment in this world and the hereafter, are totally in Allah's knowledge in the eternity of the past and the everlasting future.

The Quran has many instances which indeed verify this claim: one such example is "O Allah, belong the East and West, Allah guides whomever He will to a straight path." [2:135]

Thus, the determinist views mankind almost as a puppet, who have their whole destiny written out for them, and thus, have no free choice.

Accordingly, we have no control over our fate, and we are eternal bliss of Jannah (heaven), or doomed by Allah to the eternal torment of Jahannam (hell-fire).

Yet, if we are not the author of our actions as the traditionalists maintain, is it not injustice for us to be responsible for our immoral conduct, and be damned to hell for it?

Of course, the response from the traditionalists is that "Allah works in mysterious ways," and we are too limited in our reason to begin to grasp His system of justice.

This response leaves something to be desired for the advocates of the free will stance, who contend that humans have the capacity to create their actions, and hence, are indeed fully responsible for their conduct.

The rationalists, most notably

the Mu'tazila, assert that belief in Allah's system of justice requires individual human control of actions.

points.

The theory of *kasb* [acquisition] developed by Al-Ashari, by far encapsulates all factors while

This point is further verified in the Quran.

"Allah has created you and He created your actions." [37:96]

kasb is the Holy Quran itself, with many ayat that amply justify it for instance,

"Allah does not change what any people may have until they change whatever they themselves have." [13:10]

Al-Ashari was convincing when he declared that we could not use our limited powers of reason to understand divine justice.

Hence, we are prone to having varying interpretations of the Quran and what it is truly trying to get across.

Be that as it may, it seems clear that the 'synthesis position' was adopted by the majority of Sunnis because, at the very least, it does not contradict the Quran.

Since the Quran has passages as demonstrated which confirm both the notions of qadar and of man's limited free will, why not have a solution which likewise incorporates both of these factors?

The other two viewpoints, namely the determinist point of view and the *Ma'tazila* position, actually give further credence to the notion of *kasb* and qadar.

Having determined that we are responsible for our deeds, may Allah forgive us for any mistakes we made with our hasty judgments. (Amin)

Omar Shabbir Khan is The Muslim Voice's Advertising Representative and a Law School student.



The Quran has passages as demonstrated which confirm both the notions of qadar and of man's limited free will...

The Sunni synthesis position gets past the inadequacies of one-sided extreme positions, argues the author.

They feel that, rationally, Allah is not an all-mighty divinity that randomly premeditates who is good and who is evil. Rather, Allah is a just Creator that commands and orders only that which is good and just. Humans, by their own free will and choice, commit and create evil deeds and bear sole responsibility for them.

Pragmatically speaking, this is quite a compelling argument, and one which also finds some support in the Holy Quran:

"O believers, look after your own souls. He who is astray cannot hurt you, if you are rightly guided. Unto Allah shall you return all together, and He will tell you what you were doing." [5:100]

Flaws in the Mu'tazila Argument

As the passage above indicates, the *Ma'tazila* have certainly defended their rationale well.

Yet, at the same time, this train of logic has some inherent flaws in that it conflicts with the ayat in Surah Al-Baqarah,

"Allah alone is the Creator of everything." [6:102]

By contacting Allah's omnipotence, the rationalists are essentially denying qadar. How can we create what we wish?

Hence, the rationalist theory, just as the traditionalist position, falls short of fully encompassing an answer that is acceptable.

The Balanced Way

It was in the wake of this dilemma that Sunni scholars attempted to find a solution which incorporates both of these view-

menting the dichotomy of the two sides.

Moreover, this is the perspective that Sunnis follow to this present day.

Al-Ashari holds that there are limits to human reason, and that human concepts of justice cannot be applied to divine justice, since our intellectual capacities fall way too short for this task.

He maintains that, while there is definitely qadar, Allah can intervene in every place and at any particular moment to modify what is to happen.

This is the doctrine of natural causation, by which Allah commonly allowed events, actions, and deeds to follow from certain causes.

This involves the concept of mankind's *optional* and *voluntary* actions, and leads to the notion of *kasb*, the acquisition of responsibility.

Allah creates all optional, voluntary (and involuntary) actions and movements of human beings. Humans are, however, endowed with *irada* (will) for voluntary, optional actions. (This is where the concept of divine intervention fits in).

If we will to do some act, Allah creates this action if He wills too, and for reasons that He opts. Thus, optional actions occur after two circumstances:

1) that our will (*irada*) and power (*qudra*) are involved, in which case this is *kasb*, and

2) that Allah's creation, if He wills [Insha'Allah], takes place. It follows that Allah's orders and prohibitions occur because mankind has been given *kasb*.

Thus, Allah's determinism is followed by the concept of *kasb*, by which people acquire responsibility and accountability for their actions.



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The Prophet said: "Beware of trifling sins, for they accumulate over a man and destroy him." (Sahih, narrated in Imam Ahmad's Musnad)
A prophet said: "Do not neglect a small thing in dispute: surely a wasp can cause a lion's eye to bleed."

Knowledge: Perfect and Imperfect

Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's parable of young students on a boat

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, one of the great Muslim writers and thinkers of this century, gives a beautiful story in his book Islamic Concept of Prophethood (p. 29)

The difference between the perfect knowledge vouchsafed to the Prophets of God and the imperfect science and skills developed through human endeavour and intelligence is aptly brought out in metaphorical terms by a story...

Once upon a time, a few students went boating. The weather was fine, with a lively breeze. The boys were in a jovial, prankish mood. They found the boatman an agreeable rattle to taunt

A boy, more smart than the others, soon demanded of the boatman, "Uncle, which of the arts and sciences have you studied?"

"I have not learnt anything," replied the boatman coolly

Expressing pity at his ignorance, the boy rejoined, "Oh, you have studied no sciences!"

The boatman said again, "I have not even heard their names."

Another boy insisted, "But you must be knowing something about algebra and geometry..."

The boatman humbly replied, "All these things, I have never heard of them!" But, you must have learnt geography and history," asked a third boy "What are these? Men or cities?" enquired the boatman.

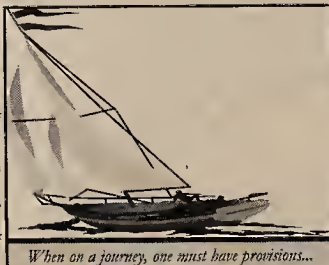
Shaking with laughter, one of the boys again asked, "What is your age, sir?"

The boatman replied that he was around 40. On this, one of the boys commented, "Then, you have surely wasted half your life."

The boatman felt slighted, but kept quiet. Providence, it seems, wanted to pay the boys with the same coin. The boat soon was overwhelmed by a furious storm and began to shake and swing dangerously.

This being the first experience of the boys at rough waters, they were all frightened. Now, it was the turn of the boatman, who, in all seriousness asked, "What are the sciences you have studied, my sons?"

The immature youths began enumerating the subjects they had studied, naively. When they had finished, the boatman asked them, smiling, "This all fine. But, have you learnt swimming? If the boat overturns, could you save your lives?"



None of the boys knew how to swim. They replied, gloomily, "Alas, we never thought of learning that too."

The boatman laughed and said, "As you have just said, I wasted half of my life, but you have ruined the whole of yours. None of your arts and sciences can save your lives now, for you do now know the only art that could have saved you today."

Maulana Nadwi continues:

This story accurately depicts the pitfalls of all the advanced and cultured, but wary nations. They normally apply themselves to acquire and develop all the branches of learning, discover secrets of nature and the treasures of

the earth, and evolve new devices to increase their power.

But they ignore the very lustrous knowledge that opens the gate of divine gnosis, which tells them how to win the pleasure of God, leads them to salvation and success, teaches the unerring manner of behaviour and conduct, curbs evil nature and carnal instincts, encourages virtuosity and seamliness and creates the awe of the Lord and Master in the heart of man.

For these are the qualities indispensable for keeping any society on the right path and guarding it from inquiry, degeneration and wickedness. They alone can help man in finding out the importance of the Hereafter and of being just to others, of holding down his pride

and self-conceit which delivers him from lust and greed and leads him to take up the path of temperance and self-discipline and to desist from efforts hurtful to his own self

A vivid description of nations giving themselves airs and showing contempt to the Prophets of their age not well versed in the academic pursuits of their time has been given by Allah in the Quran:

"And when their messengers brought them clear proofs (of Allah's Sovereignty) they exulted in the knowledge they themselves possessed. And that which they were wont to mock befell them." (40: 83)

THE PROPHET (s) PRAYED:

Allahumma aati nafsee taqwaaha; wa zakkaaha anta khayru man zakkaaha; anta waliyyuha wa maulaaha.

"O Allah, grant my soul its piety and purify it, for You are the best to purify it. You are its protector and guardian."
(Sahih Muslim)

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ISLAMIC AQEEDAH - YOU AND YOUR BELIEF (PART 7)

TAWHEED AL-ULOOHIYYAH

By **SHAIKH FAISAL ABDUR-RAZAK**

7.1 Praise be to Almighty Allah, Lord of the entire Universe. In His Hand is the Dominion of the heavens and the earth. All Sovereignty belongs to Him, and all Praise is only for Him.

All His prescribed Laws and what He has decreed are from His wisdom. He does whatever He wills and commands whatever He wishes. I testify that there is none to be worshipped but Almighty Allah. He is One, He has no partners, and there is none like unto Him.

All I testify that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger, He is the last and Seal of the Prophets, and the best of all creations. May the Peace and Blessings of Almighty Allah be upon him, his family, his companions, and all those who follow him until the Day of Judgement.

7.2 This is the seventh article in the series dealing with 'AQEEDAH or ISLAMIC CREED. In the previous installment we discussed one of the three categories of TAWHEED and mentioned some of its practical implications in the life of a Muslim. In this article we continue our discussion on the categories of TAWHEED, dealing specifically with TAWHEED AL-ULOOHIYYAH or Maintaining the Unity of Allah's Divinity and His Worship.

Tawheed al-Uloohiyyah: Unity of Allah's Divinity

7.3 The Holy Qur'an states:

"Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Guardian and Disposer of all affairs. To Him belong the keys of the Heavens and the earth. And those who reject the signs of Allah, it is they who will be in loss. Say: 'Is it some one other than Allah that you order me to worship, O you ignorant ones?' But it has already been revealed to you, -as it was revealed to those before you, -if you were to join (gods with Allah), truly fruitless will be your work (in life), and you will surely be among the losers." Nay, but worship Allah, and he of those who give thanks." [AZ-ZUMAR, 39:62-66]

7.4 It is not enough to believe in the other two categories of Tawheed alone. Tawheed Al-Rububiyyah and Tawheed Al-Asmaa Was-Sifat must be accompanied by TAWHEED AL-ULOOHIYYAH before it can be considered complete. TAWHEED AL-ULOOHIYYAH means MAINTAINING THE UNITY OF ALLAH'S DIVINITY AND HIS WORSHIP. It is also called TAWHEED AL-IBAADAH.

7.4.1 The Holy Qur'an, Almighty Allah tells us of the attitude of the Mushkoon (idolaters) during the time of the Prophet (PBUH). They confirmed

many aspects of Tawheed but were still declared idolaters because of not accepting Tawheed in its entirety. Almighty Allah reveals to us in the Qur'an:

"Say: 'Who is it that gives you sustenance from the sky and from the earth? Or who is it that has power over hearing and sight? And who is it that brings out the living from the dead and the dead from the living? And who is it that rules and regulates all affairs?' They will all say: 'ALLAH!' Say to them: 'Will you not then show piety to Him?' [SURAH YUNUS, 10:31]

"If you ask them, WHO CREATED THEM, they will certainly say: 'ALLAH!' [SURAH AZ-ZUKH-RUF, 43:87]

"And if indeed you ask them, Who is it that sends down water from the sky, and gives life to the earth, after its death? They will certainly reply: 'ALLAH'."

Say: Praise be to Allah. But most of them understand not." [SURAH AL-ANKABUT, 29:63]

The Nature of Idolatry

7.4.2 The pagans of Makkah all knew that Allah was their creator, sustainer, Lord, and Master. But that knowledge did not make them Muslims in the sight of Allah. Infact, Almighty Allah said of them:

"And most of them claim to believe in Allah but they really commit Shirk (associate partners with Him)." [SURAH YUNUS, 12:106]

Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali in his commentary on this verse stated:

"Even if people profess a nominal faith in Allah, they are corrupt by believing in other things as if they were Allah's partners, or had some share in the shaping of the world's destiny - in some circles, it is idolatry, the worship of stocks and stones. In others, it is Christianity and Manichaeism, or the deification of heroes and men of renown. In others it is the power of nature or of life. And in other circles it is the worship of human intellect personified in Science or Art or invention, and this is the more common form of modern idolatry."

Mujahid Ibn Jubayr Al-Makki (642-722), who was a Tabi' and 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas' most outstanding student, commented on this verse as follows:

"Their belief in Allah represented by their statement, 'Allah created us, provides for us and take our lives', did not stop them from worshipping other gods along with Allah."

From the above verses, it is clear that the Kuffaar or Disbelievers knew of Allah's sovereignty, dominion and power. In fact, they used to devote various types of worship to Him, such

as pilgrimage, charity, animal sacrifice, and prayers in times of need. Some of them even claimed to be following the religion of Abraham. Almighty Allah tells us in the Holy Qur'an:

"Abraham was not a Jew, nor was he a Christian; but he was a true, upright Muslim (surrendering to the will of Allah), and he was not of the idolaters." [SURAH AALI-IMRAAN, 3:67]

7.4.3 Some of the idolaters in Makkah even believed in Resurrection, the Day of judgement,

The most important aspect of Tawheed is TAWHEED AL-ULOOHIYYAH. Maintaining the Unity of Allah's Divinity and His Worship. All forms of worship must be directed only to Allah because He alone deserves to be worshipped.

and Predestination (QADAR). Conclusive evidence can be found in the poetry of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic times). Sulayman Ibn 'Abdul Wahhab in his book, TAYSEER AL-'AZEEZ AL-HAMEED, quotes some of the sayings of famous poets. For example, 'ANTARAH AL-'ABSEE was quoted as saying:

"O Abi, to where will you run from DEATH, if my Lord in the sky has DESTINED it."

The famous poet, Zuhayr was reported to have said:

"It is either delayed, placed in a BOOK and saved for the DAY OF JUDGEMENT, or hastened and avenged."

7.5 Inspite of the Qurayshi's con-

firmation and Almighty Allah. Allah emphasized the importance of directing worship to Him alone by pointing out that this was the main purpose of man's creation and the essence of the message brought by all the Prophets. Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

"I did not create the Jinn and Mankind except to worship Me." [SURAH ADH-DHAARIYAAT, 51:56]

"Verily, We have sent to every nation a Messenger (saying), 'Worship Allah and avoid false gods.'" [SURAH AN-NAHL, 16:36]

7.6.1 Almighty Allah made worship an integral part of man's nature. He sent to them Prophets and Books of Revelation to clarify the purpose of creation which was within man's mental ability to grasp. That purpose is the worship of Allah (Ibaadah), and the man

message of the Prophets was to worship Allah alone, Tawheed al-Ibaadah. Consequently the gravest sin is Shirk, the worship of others instead of Allah or along with Allah.

In Surah Al-Fat-hah, which every Muslim is required to recite in his or her prayers at least seven times daily, the fourth verse says: "YOU alone we worship and from YOU alone we seek help."

"This is a clear statement that all forms of worship must be directed only to Allah."

7.6.2 The Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) confirmed the concept of Unity of Worship when he said in a Hadith:

On the authority of Abu 'Abbas Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both), who said:

One day I was behind the Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and he said to me:

"Young man, I shall teach you some words of advice: Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, ask only of Allah. If you seek help, seek help only from Allah."

Know that if the nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, it would benefit you only with something that Allah had already prescribed for you, and that if they gather together to harm you with anything, they would harm you only with something Allah had already prescribed for you. The pen has been lifted and the pages have dried." [AT-TIRMIDHI]

A Direct Relationship

7.7 The absence of any need for intercession is further emphasized by the many Qur'anic verses indicating the Closeness and Nearness of Allah to mankind. Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

"When My servants ask you (O Muhammad) about Me, (tell

them), 'I am indeed close to them: I respond to the prayer of every suppliant when he calls on Me. So let them respond to Me, and believe in Me, in order that they may be guided aright.'" [SURAH AL-BAQARAH, 2:186]

"It is We who created man, and We know what his soul whispers to him, for we are nearer to him than his private vein." [SURAH QAAF, 50:16]

7.8 The term Ibaadah means total obedience and worship, and Allah is considered the ultimate Legislator and Lawgiver. The implementation of secular systems not based on Divine Law (Shari'ah) is an act of disbelief in and rejection of divine Law. Such a belief constitutes a form of worshipping other than Allah or SHIRK. Almighty Allah says in the Qur'an:

"And those who do not rule by what Allah has revealed are Unbelievers (Kafiruun)." [SURAH AL-MAA-IDAH, 5:44]

On one occasion the Sahabah, 'Adee Ibn Haatim, who was a convert from Christianity, heard the Prophet (PBUH) recite the Qur'anic verse:

"They have taken their rabbis and monks as lords besides Allah,"

[SURAH AT-TAWBAH, 9:31] so he said: "O Prophet of Allah, surely we did not worship them! The Prophet said to him:

"Did they not make forbidden (Haram) what Allah had made lawful (Halal), and you all followed them and made it Haram?" And did they not make Halal what Allah had made Haram, and you all followed them and made it Halal?"

He replied, 'We certainly did! The Prophet (PBUH) then said: "That was how you worshipped them." [REPORTED BY IMAM AT-TIRMIDHI]

Implementation of Shariah

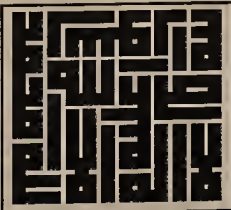
7.9 Consequently, a very significant part of Tawheed Al-Uloohiyyah or Tawheed Al-Ibaadah involves the implementation of Shari'ah or Islamic Law. The acceptance of Non-Islamic rule in place of Shari'ah is SHIRK and an act of KUFAR.

Those in a position to change it must do so, while those unable to implement physical change must speak out against the rule of Kufar and call for the implementation of Shari'ah. Muslims must work diligently to develop Islamic alternatives, based on Tawheed, for the existing

Non-Tawheedi systems prevalent today. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

"Whoever among you sees an evil, he must change it with his hand, and if he is not able to, then he must speak out against it, and if he is not able to, then he must hate it in his heart but it is the weakest level of faith (Imaan)."

Shaikh Faisal is an Imam in the Toronto area.



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See Page 5 for info on the Mayor of Sarajevo Lecture (Oct 24th)

Our Study Circles (Halaqas) have started. For more info, please call Amer Shalaby (963-9174) For more info on the MSA, call Abdul Rehman (905-569-3367) or Rameen (264-4770) or Shiraz (905-420-0854)

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